United Nations A/C.1/52/PV.25

General Assembly
Fifty-second Session

Official Records

First Committee
25th Meeting
Monday, 29 June 1998, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Nkgowe ..... (Botswana)

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Parnohadiningrat (Indonesia), Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Organization of work

The Acting Chairman: As members will recall, the General Assembly, in December of last year, left open for further consideration, at the resumed session, agenda item 73 (a), regarding the Disarmament Commission, and agenda item 83, regarding rationalization of the work of the First Committee. Therefore, we have on the agenda of this resumed session two items, which, pursuant to resolution 52/12 B, should be concluded before the end of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly.

In order to organize our work for the session, I have prepared, with the assistance of the Secretariat, a programme of work which is contained in document A/C.1/52/2/Add.1 and which is before the Committee for consideration.

If there is no comment, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to adopt its programme of work as contained in document A/C.1/52/2/Add.1.

It was so decided.

Agenda items 73 and 83 (*continued*)

Consideration of draft resolutions or decisions submitted under agenda items 73 and 83

The Acting Chairman: In accordance with the adopted programme of work, today we shall consider proposals put forward under agenda items 73 (a) and 83. In this connection, a revised draft decision on item 83, submitted by the Chairman following extensive consultations among delegations, is now before the Committee for consideration, as contained in document A/C.1/52/L.51/Rev.2.

This draft decision was revised on the basis of the previous draft decision, contained in document A/C.1/52/L.51/Rev.1, which was considered in November of last year. In particular, paragraph (a) (i) was changed, as a result of extensive consultations conducted by the Chairman of the First Committee during the past months, to include the agreed phrase,

> "in not less than 30 meetings and in a time-frame not exceeding five weeks".

I believe that this revised draft decision will be acceptable to all Member States.

With regard to item 73 (a), the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission sent a letter to the Chairman of the First Committee transmitting the result of the consideration of the subject at the 1998 substantive session of the Commission, as contained in document A/C.1/52/8. In this connection, a series of informal consultations have

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been held during the past weeks, and agreement has been reached on a text on the subject of revitalization, streamlining and rationalization of the work of the Disarmament Commission, which is also now before the Committee for consideration, as contained in draft decision A/C.1/52/L.53.

In accordance with the programme of work, the Committee will take action on proposals submitted under agenda items 73 and 83, namely, draft decisions A/C.1/52/L.53 and A/C.1/52/L.51/Rev.2, respectively.

Delegates may recall that during the consultations on agenda item 83 that took place some weeks ago, eight delegations requested the Secretariat to make a statement to confirm the arrangement of the work of the First Committee, that is, to conclude the First Committee's work in the future, as described in the draft decision. In this regard, I would like to give the floor to the Secretariat.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): In connection with paragraph (a) (i) of draft decision A/C.1/52/L.51/Rev.2, which states that the First Committee will make every effort to conduct and conclude its substantive work with the most efficient use of time in not less than 30 meetings and in a time-frame not exceeding five weeks, I wish to make the following statement.

As a result of consultations with the competent unit of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, it is confirmed that, under normal circumstances and on the basis of past experiences, the Secretariat will be able to make the appropriate arrangements for conference services in order for the First Committee to conclude its substantive work with the most efficient use of time in not less than 30 meetings and in a time-frame not exceeding five weeks.

It is understood that such an arrangement will be made without prejudice to the provision contained in paragraph 36 of the annex of General Assembly resolution 51/241, which states:

> "The First Committee and the Fourth Committee shall not meet simultaneously and may consider meeting in a sequential manner during the regular session of the General Assembly."

The Acting Chairman: I shall now give the floor to delegations wishing to make general statements or to introduce draft decisions on item 83 of our agenda, "Rationalization of the work and reform of the agenda of the First Committee".

I see that no delegation wishes to speak.

Action on draft resolutions or decisions submitted under agenda items 73 and 83

The Acting Chairman: The Committee, if it so desires, can take a decision on the draft presented by the Chairman of the First Committee as a result of his consultations. Rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly states that:

> "Proposals and amendments shall normally be submitted in writing to the Secretary-General, who shall circulate copies to the delegations. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Committee unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting. The Chairman may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of amendments, or of motions as to procedure, even though such amendments and motions have not been circulated or have only been circulated the same day."

Judging from the second sentence of this rule, it seems that the First Committee can take decisions on the draft submitted by the Chairman of the First Committee on item 83.

Unless I hear any objection, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft decision A/C.1/52/L.51/Rev.2.

It is my understanding that the draft decision will be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft decision A/C.1/52/L.51/Rev.2 was adopted.

The Acting Chairman: I shall now give the floor to those delegations wishing to make statements in explanation of position.

If no delegations wish to speak, I shall turn now to item 73 (a), which concerns the revitalization, streamlining and rationalization of the work of the Disarmament Commission. I should like to invite Ambassador Sychou, Acting Chairman of the Commission, to introduce the draft decision on the items that I mentioned earlier.

Mr. Sychou (Belarus) (*interpretation from Russian*): On 28 April last the Disarmament Commission concluded its 1998 substantive session and requested that the fifty-third session of the General Assembly consider its report, which contains the text of the report of the Committee of the Whole on the issue of the revitalization, rationalizing and streamlining of the Disarmament Commission. The Disarmament Commission considered this issue pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/12 B of 19 December 1997.

The Chairman of the Disarmament Commission stated that consultations took place in the course of the last two weeks. Those consultations were conducted on the basis of the Chairman's proposed text, which is contained in A/C.1/52/8. I am pleased to report that the consultations were concluded fruitfully, resulting in the adoption of the text contained in document A/C.1/52/L.53. Changes were made to the Chairman's proposed text; paragraph 7 was eliminated and paragraph 2 was amended. Since the consultations took place in English, I shall read the amended paragraph in English:

(spoke in English)

> "(b) As of the 2000 substantive session, the substantive agenda of the Disarmament Commission should normally comprise two agenda items per year from the whole range of disarmament issues, including one on nuclear disarmament. The possibility of a third agenda item would be retained if there were consensus to adopt such an item. Parallel meetings of the subsidiary bodies should be avoided." *[A/C.1/52/L.53]*

(spoke in Russian)

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all delegations that demonstrated a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding. The amendments that I have just read out are being put forward on behalf of the Bureau of the Disarmament Commission and are now being submitted to the First Committee for its consideration at this resumed session.

It is our hope that the text contained in document A/C.1/52/L.53 will be adopted by consensus.

The Acting Chairman: If there are no further comments on the proposals submitted under agenda item 73 (a), the Committee will take action on draft decision A/C.1/52/L.53.

As before, rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly applies in this case. However, if it so desires, the Committee can, of course, take a decision on the proposal submitted by the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission on behalf of the Bureau of the Disarmament Commission.

If no delegations wish to make statements or to explain their position before a decision is taken, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft decision A/C.1/52/L.53.

It is my understanding that the draft decision will be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft decision A/C.1/52/L.53 was adopted.

The Acting Chairman: If no delegations wish to explain their position on the decision just adopted, the Committee has concluded its work in accordance with today's programme.

I declare the fifty-second session of the First Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.